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Radical compassion for Therians and other animals

Some thoughts on love, compassion and kindness as a community

A little howl into the void
by Shimi

Little Howls Into the Void: A Call to Care, Community, & Kindness

These little howls into the void are not just calls to the lonely; they are signals, sent out into the dark, hoping to reach others who might be listening. They are small, songs, soft, sometimes informative, sometimes insistent, echoing into the unknown with the simple, radical belief that some creature out there needing to read this, will hear it. And if they do—if even one creature lifts their head in recognition, if even one soul feels less alone—then this has done its work.

Because at its heart, this is what it means to be part of something greater than ourselves. To reach out, even when we are unsure. To offer a moment of kindness, a shared warmth, a soft place to land. It is the belief that care is not just a personal act but a communal one. To take care of ourselves, we must also take care of each other.

These little howls are an offering, an open paw extended in friendship. They remind us that our voices matter—not because they are loud, not because they demand attention, but because they are real, and because they carry the weight of something tender, something essential. In a world that often pushes us toward isolation, toward the belief that we must fend for ourselves, these small howls defy that logic. They insist: No. We are here. We are together. And we will take care of one another.

Care is not just a necessity—it is an act of rebellion. In a time when exhaustion is seen as a virtue and when kindness is treated as a weakness, we choose instead to create spaces where gentleness thrives. We look out for each other. We build small sanctuaries amid chaos. We make sure no one is left behind.

So, if you are reading this, if you are listening, know that the howl is meant for you. It is a reminder that you are not alone. That you are part of something vast and full of love. That even in the quietest corners of the world, there are others—with outstretched, hearts open—waiting to welcome you home.

Shimi

Radical Compassion for Therians and other animals

To be a therian is to live in multiple worlds at once: the human and the more-than-human, the present and the ancestral, the seen and the unseen. To be a radical lover is much the same—to recognise love as something beyond the transactional, something wild and woven into the bones of the earth. And in a world that does not always understand either, self-care must be a collective act.

Self-care in the radical sense is not about scented candles and bubble baths, though it can be. It is about mutual uplift. It is about care that does not fold in on itself but reaches outward, like a wolf licking the wounds of a pack-mate, like crows calling each other to a hidden cache of food.

Self-care is collective care, and collective care is survival.

"Let us love not in word or speech but in action and truth." (1 John 3:18).

These words, written thousands of years ago, still resonate in a world that asks us to prove our worth through exhaustion, through suffering. But we, the radical lovers, the kin-bound, the feral-hearted, know better. We know that to care for ourselves is to care for each other and to care for each other is to defy every force that would see us broken and afraid.

Therianism as a Path of Love and Care

Therianism is not just an identity; it is a way of being with. It is a recognition of self as an animal, not in a metaphorical way but in a way that shapes the soul. And animals, despite all that human culture would say otherwise, are not selfish creatures. They are bound to each other, woven into the fabric of their kin groups and landscapes.

To live as a Therian is to understand the need for gentleness within the animalistic. We know, perhaps better than most, what it means to be out of step with the world as it is structured. We know

what it is to long for touch, for recognition, for the feeling of running with the pack or flying in formation. In that knowing, we are compelled—called to create what the world withholds.

Therian and wolf-writer **Rain the Grey** puts it simply: *"A lone wolf is not a natural state. It is a wounded state. We heal best in the company of those who understand our howls."*

Self-care for therians must always make room for that howling. It is in our voices lifted together that we find solace, whether that is through online communities, shared housing, spiritual gatherings, or the simple act of affirming each other's experiences.

Community: The Hearth of the Wild-Hearted

Therians and radical lovers do not thrive in isolation. Our self-care must include the care of our kin—those who move through the world as we do, those whose hearts beat to similar rhythms.

Community care in 2025 must be fierce because America in 2025 is still a place of precarity. The cost of living soars, queer and trans people are under threat, and the forces of capitalism demand we run ourselves ragged just to survive. But we have always been good at making something out of nothing. We have always known how to build with our hands, our words, our devotion to each other.

A radical lover, theologian Rev. **Anna-Therese Cole**, writes: *"The first church was a shared meal. A loaf of bread, a jug of wine, hands passing food from palm to palm. That is where holiness is found—not in the gilded cathedrals, but in the act of breaking bread together, in feeding each other with no expectation of return."*

Self-care means learning to live without fear. It means gathering in kitchens and queer bookstores, in forest clearings and urban squats, in Discord servers and rented back rooms. It means making sure no one in our circle goes without a meal or a place to sleep, everyone gets a shoulder to lean on when they need it.

This is why things like community kitchens, clothing swaps, and mutual aid funds matter. It is why we pass down what we have, and why we tend to each other's wounds. Radical love is a refusal of scarcity. It is a declaration that there is enough, so long as we share it.

Faith and the Sacredness of Wild Things

Many of us were told that faith had no place for us—that god, or the gods, or some numinous undeclared force of the universe, did not recognise our wildness as sacred. But that is a lie.

Nature-based and animal-aligned spiritualities have long understood that the divine is not confined to human form. The wolves and the hares, the deer and the ravens, all are held in the great web of spirit. And we, as therians and radical lovers, are no different.

Queer Christian writer **Micah Lynx** speaks to this in their reflections on faith and animality: *"If God's hand shaped the lion and the lamb, the fox and the owl, then surely it shaped me too. My wildness is not an accident. It is not something to be tamed. It is a gift."*

Self-care must make room for the sacred. Whether that means lighting a candle to Hecate or Artemis, offering prayers to the spirits of the land, or simply taking the time to stand barefoot on the earth and remember that we belong to it, not apart from it.

For those raised in faith traditions that rejected us, healing means reclaiming what was stolen. It means understanding that the divine does not demand our suffering, but our thriving.

"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." (John 10:10).

We are meant to live fully. To love fully. To rest fully. Any faith that tells us otherwise is not something we need to keep and carry.

Acts of Wild Kindness

In a time of increasing cruelty, kindness is a revolutionary act. Not the hollow, saccharine kindness demanded by those in power—the kind that asks us to be meek, to never raise our voices—but a fierce, protective kindness. This is the permanent and declarative kind that prioritises our autonomy and values our self-worth, the kind that says unequivocally: You are not alone. You will not be left behind.

Therian poet **Wren Runningpaw** writes: *"We are not soft things, but we are gentle things. I will bare my teeth at the world for you. I will guard your sleep, run at your side, stand between you and the storm."*

Self-care is remembering that we do not have to be gentle at the expense of ourselves. That we do not have to make peace with those who seek to harm us. Our kindness is for each other.

It is for the ones who need it most.

Kindness is:

1. Holding space for a friend in distress, without demanding they make sense.
2. Leaving out and freely giving food or resources to someone who may need it.
3. Teaching survival skills—whether that's first aid, how to forage, or how to keep each other safe in a protest.
4. Telling someone, You are good. You are loved. You are not alone.

Carrying Each Other Forward

We are still here. In 2025, in a world that asks us to conform or disappear, we remain. We howl, we love, we refuse to be anything other than what we are. That is a gift.

Self-care is not a luxury. It is a necessity. It is the fire in the hearth, the food on the table, the steady hands that catch us when we fall. It is our faith in each other that tells us we belong.

It is our resistance to a world that tries to make us small. Every act of self-preservation—every shared meal, every moment of joy, every whispered word of love—is a declaration that we will not be erased.

Self-care, for us, is not just personal. It is communal. It is survival. It is the whispered knowledge passed from one generation of wild-hearted souls to the next, the understanding that we do not thrive alone. We were never meant to. Even the fiercest of creatures have their kin. The lone wolf is *not* a hero—it is a wounded thing, longing for the safety of the pack. The rabbit does not run alone—it flees to the warren, where warmth and safety wait.

Even the hawk, who flies highest, calls out, its voice searching for another to answer.

And so, we answer each other.

We answer in the ways we care for one another, in the way we hold space for those who feel lost, in the way we remind each other that we are not alone. We answer in the way we push back against the lie that care must be earned, and that love must be conditional. We refuse the logic that tells us we are only as valuable as what we produce, that our worth must be measured in exhaustion.

We were built for <u>so much better</u> than this.

We were made for mornings where the air smells like coffee and woodsmoke, for nights spent in tangled conversation, and for the fierce joy of knowing we are understood. We were made for hands clasped in comfort, for food shared with laughter, and for the promise that someone will be there when we wake.

Radical love tells us that care is not a currency. That rest is not something we must buy. That we deserve to exist in fullness, in wildness, in joy.

So we stay. We make a home for each other, in whatever ways we can. In shared apartments, in co-ops, in tents and shelters and borrowed couches, in cities and forests and liminal places between. We make homes out of each other, out of the knowing that no matter where we are, we are not alone.

We will not let each other fall. We will not let each other be forgotten. We are still here. And we will remain.

For every therian, for every radical lover, for every queer and every outcast:

You are never too much.

You are not alone.

You are carried in the arms of your kin, in the hearts of those who love like you do.

And we will keep carrying each other until the world learns to love as we do.

Some Thoughts on Love, Compassion, and Kindness

To be a Therian is to know something about longing. It is to carry a feeling that is difficult to name, a knowing that runs deeper than words. It is the awareness of something truly vast inside us, something that does not fit neatly into the human world. It is the ache of remembering a thing we have never quite touched, the recognition of something kindred in the eyes of an animal, in each other therian we meet—in the way the wind moves through the trees, in the silence before dawn.

It is easy, sometimes, to feel apart. To feel strange, misplaced, isolated. We are told, in many ways, that our ways of being do not make sense, that they are indulgent or foolish. And yet, we exist. And we exist together.

Therianthropy, at its heart, is not just about the self. It is about connection. It is about the ways we relate to each other, to the animals we feel kin with, to the world that holds us. It is about the understanding that we are not alone in this. That in all the loneliness we have felt, there have been others--running alongside us, howling in the distance, waiting to be found.

"You are seen:" The Kindness of Recognition

There is a deep kindness in being recognized. To look at another and to be seen, fully and without question, is a rare and precious thing. Many of us have known the opposite--being misunderstood, dismissed, and treated as if what we feel is strange or unreal. We have been forced to explain ourselves, to justify, to shrink into something more acceptable.

And so, when we recognise each other, it is an act of love. When we hear someone describe their connection to their theriotype and we nod in understanding, when we share our own experiences without

fear of judgment, we are offering something sacred. We are offering relief.

Therian writer **Rowan Fielding** speaks to this in their reflections on community: "*The first time I met another therian in person, I nearly cried. Not because anything profound was said, not because we had some deep philosophical conversation, but because I didn't have to explain myself. They understood. I was understood. That kind of belonging is rare, and it is necessary.*"

This is the foundation of a compassionate community--the quiet recognition, the spaces where we can exist without pretence. It is in these moments of mutual understanding that we heal the wounds of alienation.

Love in the Wildest Sense

Love, as a Therian, is often not about romance or traditional human ideas of partnership. It is something wilder, something older. It is in the way we care for each other instinctively, in the way we move toward those who need us, in the way we know that belonging is not about possession but about presence.

For many of us, love feels like the way a wolf guards its pack-mates, like the way birds call warnings to each other when danger is near. It is not spoken, not always soft, but it is always felt. It is in the instinct to protect, to shelter, to provide. It is in the recognition that we are responsible for each other, that our strength is in our bonds.

The therian writer **Grey Stag** puts it this way: *"Love, for me, is knowing I have a place to return to. Not a house, not a city, but the people who will look at me and know me, even when I cannot explain myself. It is the unspoken promise: I will not leave you behind."*

We carry that promise deeply in everything we do. In the way we check in on our friends, in the way we offer resources, in the way we make sure no one is forgotten. Love is not just a feeling--it is a commitment to showing up, again and again, being present and ready for those who need us.

Compassion Is a Hard Word in a Hard World

The world is not always kind to those who are different. It is not always kind to those who run instead of walk, who think in instincts instead of logic, who feel the pull of something beyond the human. And so, we must be kind to each other.

Compassion is the survival tool of the marginalised. It is the thing that keeps us all aware and alive, the thing that reminds us that no matter how difficult the world becomes, we are not alone in it.

To be a Therian is to exist in a state of contradiction—we live in a society that does not always understand us, but we also live in a world full of creatures who do. The fox doesn't question why another fox runs. The deer doesn't ask another to justify its flight. We, too, can offer each other that grace.

Compassion means *listening*. It means making space for each other's experiences. It means understanding that there is no one way to be a Therian, no single story that defines us all. It means allowing each other to be messy, and incomplete, to be unsure, to change, and to grow.

Therian poet **Lark Nightpaw** writes: *"We are not the same, and we never will be. And yet, we know each other. In the way we move, in the way we long, in the way we seek. This is enough."*

"Enough." That is what we must remind each other--we are enough, exactly as we are.

Holding Space for Each Other

There are so few places in the world where we can exist without having to defend ourselves. And so, we must make those places for each other. A community is not built only from shared identity. It is built from action, from care, from the effort we put into holding space for each other. It is built from the forums we create, the gatherings we host, and the support we offer when someone, be they

pack member or casual contact, barely a stranger is struggling. It is built from the quiet things--the way we send a message to check in, the way we share resources, we make sure no one is left behind.

We are creatures who understand the importance of pack, of colony, of murmuration. We know that life is best lived together. We know when one of us falters, it is the role of the rest to back us up.

"*No one falls alone*" writes **Redtail**, a long-time Therian community organiser. "No one gets left in the dark. If you need help, if you are hurting, if you do not know how to keep going, we will find you. We will bring you back home."

That is what lies at the heart of what we must all offer. To bring each other home.

This Future We All Want We Can Build It.

In a world that often feels cold, we create warmth. In a world that often feels isolating, we create belonging. In a world that tells us we are too strange, too much, we remind each other: that we are just as we were meant to be.

Love, compassion, kindness—these are not abstract ideals. They are daily choices. They are the ways we offer patience to those who are learning, the ways we hold space for those who are grieving, the ways we remind each other that we are seen, that we are valued, and that we are understood.

The therian community is not perfect. No community is. But we have something rare: the knowledge that we are bound together, not by obligation, but by something wilder. By instinct. By knowing. By the promise that no matter how lost we feel, there is someone out there who understands.

And so we keep going. We keep building, keep holding, keep making space. Because love, in all its forms, is the foundation of what we are. Because compassion is the thing that carries us forward. Because kindness, shared freely, is how we remind each other that we are not alone: We are here. We are together. And that is enough.

About Shimi:

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Shimi is a ragingly unrepentant faggot-dyke-thing, a relationship anarchist, very therian-for-therian and an all-around sapphic furfag. "I'm a skinny little rat-faced girl, an apex scav, with a bitey li'l critter inside my head."

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